

S P E E C H

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OF

HON. H. H. SIBLEY, OF MINNESOTA,

(1811 - 1871)

ON

THE TERRITORIES AND OUR INDIAN RELATIONS.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FRIDAY, AUGUST 2, 1850.

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## THE TERRITORIES AND INDIAN RELATIONS.

Mr. SIBLEY said: Mr. Chairman, before I proceed to the consideration of the particular subject before the House, I crave its indulgence while I advert, in very brief terms, to certain remarks made by an honorable gentleman from New York [Mr. DUER] a few days since, with reference to the privileges of a Delegate to Congress. It was my wish to reply to him at the time, but I could not obtain the floor for that purpose.

That gentleman denied that a Delegate could be invested with any rights in this House, save that of addressing it upon subjects strictly appertaining to the Territory represented by him; and he even asserted that the practice of the House in permitting a Delegate to make a motion, or to introduce a bill or resolution, was not proper, nor in accordance with constitutional restrictions. I do not intend to go into a discussion of this subject, but will merely state certain propositions, which I believe to be correct, to justify this body in extending to the Delegates from Territories every privilege of members, save that of voting.

Mr. DUER (Mr. S. yielding.) It was the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. STEPHENS] and not me, who assumed that position. I believe that Delegates are properly allowed to debate all subjects.

Mr. SIBLEY. The act of 1817, which defines the duties of Delegates, extends to them the right of debating, but not of voting. That is to say, they are permitted to do everything but that act, which is of itself the sum and substance of all legislation. If I do not entirely misapprehend what the term legislation means in its strict sense, it is the majority vote of the members of a constituted body authorized to make laws. All motions, or resolutions, or other proceedings of such a body, are the preliminaries, the prerequisites, the safeguards; but the vote itself is the legislation, and nothing else. Will any one contend that it is not in the power of this House, at its discretion, to do away entirely with all the forms now required by its rules, except so far as they may be provided for in the Constitution itself, and vote at once upon any naked proposition made by one of its members and adopt it? Would the mere submitting of such a proposition be a part of the legislation, or would not the vote giving it vitality and effectiveness be the legislative act? Until that vote was given, the proposition itself remained a naked ab-

straction, inert, lifeless, and without strength or virtue.

The right of debate to be accorded by the House to a Delegate, should, in the opinion of the gentleman, be confined entirely to subjects of interest to the Territory by him represented. Admitting this construction, I would inquire what great measures are legislated upon by Congress which do not as much affect the people of the Territories as those of the States? All laws proposed to be passed which have in view changes of the tariff system, or in the price of the public lands, or in the system of internal improvements, or in the fiscal or commercial policy of the country; in fact, every subject of general importance to which the attention of Congress is directed, carries with it as much of weal or woe to the people of your Territories as to those of the States themselves. Would there be a show of justice in precluding Delegates from taking part in the debate upon such topics?

After all, what is an organized Territory, and what its political relation to the General Government? It is a collection of citizens of the United States upon the public domain, having individually, as such, all the specific and constitutional rights of other citizens resident in the States, and paying in the same ratio their proportion of the expenses of the Government of the Union; but not being sufficiently numerous to reach that standard which is entitled to a vote under the laws of the land, they are debarred from that privilege, but from no other. In other words, your Territories are members of the national family, not, indeed, arrived at maturity, nor emancipated from paternal control, but equally interested in the welfare of that family, with those who have arrived at full age, and equally entitled to be heard on those subjects, which are of importance to all.

If this is a rational and just view of the position which a Territory bears to the parent Government, and if there is nothing in the Constitution which forbids this House from admitting Delegates as consulting, but not voting members, I cannot perceive the propriety of the views expressed by the honorable gentleman to whom I have referred. If making motions and introducing resolutions are no more strict legislation, than is the mere act of debating such motions or resolutions, then I must think the member from New York is

decidedly wrong in admitting the one privilege, and rejecting or refusing the other.

The difference between a territorial condition under this Republic, and a mere colony, is well and forcibly described by an English writer. "The United States," he says, "have no colonies. California and Oregon, whether existing as Territories or organized as States, are integral portions of the Republic. They occupy a definite place in a great imperial system, nicely balancing the centrifugal form of self-government, with the centripetal obligations of the federal league. Whereas, an English colony, what is it?—a community which is to the world what the Cagots were to mediæval society—an entity unknown to international law, and disregarded by national comity—without one distinct right, or one unalterable privilege, without name, position, character or cognizable analogy."

With these few remarks, Mr. Chairman, upon the general character of territorial governments, I now proceed to another topic, to which I alluded several weeks since, stating, at the same time, my intention to discuss it at an appropriate period. I refer to our relations with the Indian tribes within our limits, but more especially with those of the Northwest. The subject is one which appeals to the sympathies not only of the people I have the honor to represent, but to those of every American. The solution of the problem which involves the civilization of the remaining Aboriginal tribes, or the alternative of their utter extinction, is intimately connected, also, with the peace and ultimate prosperity of our own Territory. It is for these reasons that I regard it to be my imperative duty, not only to my constituents, but to the Indians themselves, to review briefly the policy of the Government in their intercourse with the latter, and to suggest such a remedy for existing evils, as will, in my judgment, suffice to meet the exigencies of the case. If, unfortunately, this Government shall still persist in its present course, with a full knowledge of its unhappy tendency, Minnesota shall at least be freed from any responsibility on that score.

I am aware, sir, that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs is required by law to make an annual exhibit of the affairs of his department, and of the general condition of the Indians within the limits of the United States. But it is equally certain that his report does not receive an attentive perusal from one tenth of the members of either House of Congress. In fact, so far as any legislation is concerned, having for its object the advancement of the tribes in civilization, it may well be asserted that the whole question is banished from these Halls. You have as one of the standing committees of this House, that on Indian Affairs; but if I am not in error, it is no part of the duty assigned to that committee, composed as it is of able and intelligent men, to do more than to act upon the business which may be brought before it. It cannot reasonably be expected of that committee, continually occupied as it is with other duties, that it shall enter into a detailed examination of the condition of each tribe, to ascertain what causes are in operation seriously to affect that condition. But of one fact we are all cognizant, and that is, the absolute certainty that the Indians are rapidly diminishing in number. I conceive it to be incumbent upon this Government

to find out the cause of this diminution, and to arrest it.

Sir, at an early period of our history, there was much more attention paid to this subject than there now is, and many plans were originated to meliorate the condition of the Indian race. I cannot discover, however, that any systematized effort was made to civilize them, or to prepare them for admission into the great American society of free-men. Then, as now, philanthropic and christian associations and individuals were found laboring to evangelize them; but their efforts were then, as they now are, to a great extent abortive and unsuccessful. The policy pursued by the Government was, to make reservations upon which the Indians were to be allowed to reside for an indefinite period, after the title to their lands had been extinguished. So soon as the surrounding region became settled by the whites, these poor creatures, subjected to indignities of every description, treated as outcasts and supplied with intoxicating drinks by unprincipled white men, either dwindled rapidly away, or, forced to sell their reservations, emigrated in a body to a more remote part of the country, only, in the course of a few years, to be resubjected to the same process.

Mr. Chairman, the history of the northern portion of this continent presents one strange fact for our consideration. In the wars of the Greeks, the Romans, and the Franks, and, in more modern times, of the British Empire in India, we read of nation after nation being subjugated, and their territories occupied, but never of their becoming speedily extinct in consequence of a failure on the part of the conqueror to allow them such privileges and such conditions as were indispensable to their existence. It remained for those Anglo-Saxons, who fled to this New World to escape persecution at home, and for their descendants, boastful as they are and have ever been, of their philanthropy and their religion—it remained for them, I say, to show to the world, that while they wrested from the red man the soil which gave him birth, they neither incorporated him into their community as a member, nor bestowed upon him any of those beneficent appliances which were necessary to preserve him, and raise him to a level with themselves. From the days of the Pilgrim Fathers to the present time, there is the same sad story to be repeated, of grievous wrongs inflicted upon this unhappy race.

Sir, history has thus far failed to do justice to the heroic bands, who have struggled so fiercely to preserve their lands and the graves of their fathers, from the grasping hand of the white man. The wars which have so often desolated the frontier, sullied indeed with horrid butcheries and atrocities on the part of the Indians, will, nevertheless, hereafter be referred to as the efforts of a brave and patriotic race to maintain themselves in the position in which Providence had placed them. True, numbers, science, and discipline, prevailed in the end, and the vanquished submitted of necessity to the will of the victor. That will was death, not by the more merciful sword, but by a lengthened course of oppression, of insult, and of degradation.

The system of removing the Indians to the west of the Mississippi originated during the administration of Mr. Monroe, but it was not acted upon to any extent until after General Jackson was ele-

rated to the Presidency. It was then announced as the scheme *par excellence*, which was to afford "healing to the nations." And, if it had been carried out according to the original design, with due care and in good faith, by the agents of the Government, it would, doubtless, have been attended with happy effects. But this has not been the case, and the actual result has been to introduce among the bands of wild and noble savages who roam the western prairies, a horde of worthless vagabonds, reeking with the vices, but possessed of none of the virtues of the whites, to breed a moral pestilence in the land, and to contaminate those who were, comparatively speaking, far elevated above them in the scale of existence. If these tribes had been more or less civilized, by the well-directed efforts of the Government itself, before they were called upon to remove, the influence exercised upon the wilder bands, when brought in contact with them, would have been at once elevating and beneficial. Unfortunately, as I have before stated, the very reverse of this has been the case.

Sir, it is my sincere conviction, that of all the Indians who have been removed to the west of the Mississippi, there are very few who entertain kind feelings towards this Government; nay more, who are not its secret or avowed enemies. This is a startling assertion, but it is not the less true. The reason is obvious to any one who is the least acquainted with Indian character. This is to be found in the defective manner in which treaties are negotiated with them, in the unfitness of the individuals too often selected as commissioners, and the little regard manifested by the agents of the Government, in carrying out the stipulations of solemn treaties after they are made. No man, sir, should be appointed to the responsible office of commissioner on the part of the Government, to negotiate with the Indians for the purchase of their lands, unless he be of high character, and possessed of a practical knowledge of the peculiar characteristics of that race. If the act of making a treaty is not to be looked upon as a mere mockery or a farce, every stipulation contained in it, and every pledge made by the authorized agent of the Government, should be as scrupulously fulfilled as if the negotiation had been entered into with a sovereign and independent nation. Nay, sir, the very fact that the weaker party are powerless to redress their grievances, and are entirely dependent upon the sense of justice of the other party, appeals strongly to this Government to avoid even the appearance of a desire to shrink from the performance of its obligations, voluntarily incurred. I regret to say, that such magnanimity as this is too seldom displayed. On the contrary, when commissioners are appointed who do not reside on the frontier, and who have little or no sympathy with the Indians, they do not hesitate to overcome the natural repugnance of the savages to part with their lands, by making promises which they know will never be performed, but which the poor victims believe to be made in good faith. The commissioners, having accomplished their object by obtaining the signature of the chiefs, plume themselves upon having made a favorable treaty, leaving the miserable savages to find out in due time that they have been betrayed and deceived. This first breach of faith is, of course, charged upon the Government itself. Then there arises another just

cause of complaint. The treaty stipulations, albeit they have been duly sanctioned by the Senate, are not fulfilled. I will venture the assertion, that not one in ten of the treaties made will be found to have been carried out in good faith. If they were, sir, your streets would not be thronged every year with delegations from distant bands, to seek justice at the hands of their "Great Father." Yea! old men making weary and toilsome pilgrimages of thousands of miles, to supplicate that their righteous claims may not be longer disregarded. One instance of this kind occurs to me, in which the Government bound itself to pay \$5,000 per annum to a certain band in 1837, and, to this day, although the sum has been regularly estimated for and appropriated by Congress, that band has never received one cent of this annuity; nor has it been expended for their benefit. This is but one case in a thousand that might readily be cited.

Sir, when these tribes, thus suffering under real or supposed grievances, are herded together like cattle, preparatory to their removal from their own lands to a far-distant dwelling-place; when, treated with contumely and threatened at every step, they arrive at length at their place of destination, is it natural to suppose that they can feel much amity for the power whose agents have done them these wrongs? No, sir; and one of the evils inseparable from this state of things is, that the hostility thus engendered is not confined to their own breasts, but is transferred, to some extent, to individuals of other bands, with whom they are brought in contact. Thus are concentrated upon our western border hordes of savages, who are all more or less imbued with feelings of distrust and hatred towards the whites, which are only kept from manifesting themselves by a fear of the superior power of the Government. Sir, all the Indian wars you have had upon your hands, and are likely to occur hereafter, have been and will be occasioned by proceedings, such as I have but faintly described, on the part of your agents. The Black Hawk difficulty, so called, which cost you millions of dollars, was thus brought about. The Florida war took its origin in the treaty of Payne's Landing, by which the Seminoles conceived themselves to have been defrauded and deeply wronged. This war has already cost you some thirty or forty millions, and from present indications, is likely to be renewed at another heavy expenditure on your part. And thus, sir, will this Government continue to be involved in troubles with the Indian tribes, until it ceases to pursue its present course with regard to them, and adopts a policy more in accordance with the principles of justice and humanity.

Mr. Chairman, I have gone into some detail of the operation of the present system upon the Indians, because it is necessary that it should be understood. A physician cannot be expected to prescribe successfully for his patient, without knowing the nature and extent of the disease. No more can Congress apply a remedy to existing evils, until they are properly probed and exposed. Sir, even the efforts of Christian missionaries to evangelize these Heathen, are more obstructed by the policy of the Government than by any other cause. The Indians who are thereby rendered restless and discontented, are little disposed to receive or profit by religious instruction. To use the words of a former eminent member of this House, "The Indian is called by the endear-

ing name of *brother*, and he is told that we are religiously bound by the most sacred injunction to "do unto others as we wish that others may do unto us; at the same time we exclude him from any participation in the benefit of our social and civil institutions. We treat the whole race as if they were not the descendants of Adam, and thus we baffle and tantalize the christian, who labors for their moral and religious instruction; and hence the deluded hopes of many wise and pious clergymen, whose efforts in their behalf, however unavailing, reflect upon them the highest honor. The Indian, at a loss to reconcile the friendly professions of the Christian, who labors for their moral and religious improvement, with the cruel treatment inflicted upon them by the Government, doubts the sincerity of the Christian, his jealousies and suspicions are excited, and the most bitter enmity to the whites rankles in his bosom." Sir, this picture, mournful as it is, which was presented to this House twenty-seven years ago, by the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs at that time, is a most correct delineation of the state of things existing at this distant period. One which would be more truthful and applicable to the present condition of affairs cannot be drawn. The thousands of dollars contributed by the Christian community in this land, for the melioration of the condition of the Indian race, and the faithful and unwearying labors of the missionaries of the Cross to evangelize them, will be alike unavailing, until the whole Indian system of the Government is changed. I bear cheerful testimony to the zeal and constancy with which these missionaries have labored in the Northwest, while I lament that they have not met with the success with which their exertions would have been crowned, if the policy of the Government had not interposed an insurmountable barrier.

It is a fact, Mr. Chairman, that under the operation of the present system, the Indian, when deprived of his lands, becomes entirely indifferent and apathetic as to his fate. With the mark of Cain upon his brow, regarded as a vagabond and treated as such, he actually loses a portion of his former vitality, and falls an unresisting prey to the slightest form of disease. It is an utter fallacy to suppose, that the diminution in the number of the Indians is attributable to the use of intoxicating drinks. True, this is an evil of great magnitude, which should be suppressed. But the real cause will be found in the policy which reduces the comparatively noble and independent savage to the condition of a vagrant and an outcast.

If you are sincerely desirous that he should strive against the process of demoralization, you must place before him some motive to stimulate his ambition, and some hope that by a course of moral and intellectual culture, he can attain to an equality with his white brethren. But to do this effectually, you must first win back his confidence, and convince him that the pledged faith of your Government, is considered as a solemn and a binding obligation, not to be dispensed with at pleasure.

Sir, I believe the first step to be taken for the improvement of the Indians, is to extend over them the protection of law. With this view, I had the honor at the beginning of this session, to introduce for the consideration of this body, a bill for the extension of the laws of the United States, over the Indian tribes within the boundaries

of Minnesota and Oregon. I included the latter at the special instance and request of my friend, the Delegate from that Territory, who fully concurs with me as to the propriety and necessity of such a measure. Sir, I can say in all sincerity, that unless this bill, or a corresponding one, is passed by Congress, all other plans for the civilization of the Indians will fail. It is the substratum upon which all else must rest. It has for its object, the security of life and property among the Indians themselves, to protect the industriously disposed against the system of communism by which they are now oppressed. I do not ground my convictions of the beneficial operations of this measure upon my own individual opinion only, but upon those of the officers of the Government, of the missionaries, and of many prominent citizens of our Territory, who have all had much opportunity of acquiring information connected with the condition of the Indians. They have petitioned you to pass such a bill. The objection, which has with some plausibility been urged against it, that it would bear with too much severity upon a barbarous people, unaccustomed to the discipline of law, has in reality no foundation, for its very intent and operation would be to arrest the cruelties and outrages which are now practiced among them, upon persons and property. Another difficulty may perhaps be suggested, that these tribes are independent, and that consequently no right exists on the part of this Government, to subject them to its laws. But, sir, this state of independence is only nominal. The Indians hold their lands by a usufructuary right, or right of occupation, the fee simple being in the United States. For this reason, the Government has never hesitated to make such rules and regulations within the limits of the Indian country, operating equally upon whites and Indians, as it has deemed expedient. And, sir, your functionaries have ever taken upon themselves to inflict punishment at will upon one tribe for committing aggressions upon another tribe. Stripes, confinement at hard labor, and the degradation and imprisonment of the chiefs and principal men, for petty offences, have been resorted to, whenever the occasion prompted a recourse to such inflictions. Nay, sir, your Department of Indian Affairs has heretofore arrogated to itself the right to stop the payment of annuities to the tribes, under solemn treaty stipulations, when one tribe has been guilty of aggressions upon another band. This was done on one occasion within a few years, when, because three or four individuals of the tribe, entitled to provisions in accordance with treaty stipulations, joined a war party, and were present at the murder of some persons of a different tribe, the department ordered the stoppage of the annuities of the bands to which the offenders belonged, and thereby occasioned the death of more than one hundred and fifty innocent individuals by starvation, or diseases engendered by improper food.

In the face of such facts as these, sir, where is there any propriety in opposing the objection to the passage of the bill referred to, on the score of the independence of these tribes? The plea is a mere mockery, and one object of the bill is to place these poor creatures under the benign rule of our own laws, and thereby put a stop forever to all the arbitrary and illegal proceedings to which I have called your attention. If the Indians must

be punished, let the inflictions at least be regulated by law. Sir, the very measure I am advocating, and which anticipates the division of property among the individual Indians, has been often recommended by eminent and experienced men holding high stations under this Government. In 1789 General Knox, then Secretary of War, thus expressed himself in a report to the President: "But it has been conceived to be impracticable to 'civilize the Indians of North America. This opinion is probably more convenient than just. To 'deny that under a course of favorable circumstances it could be accomplished, is to suppose 'the human character under the influence of such 'stubborn habits, as to be incapable of melioration 'or change, a supposition entirely contradicted by 'the progress of society, from its barbarous ages 'to its present degree of perfection. Were it possible to introduce among the Indian tribes a love 'for exclusive property, it would be a happy commencement of the business."

Mr. Calhoun took the same view of the subject in his report in 1822: "To tribes thus surrounded, nothing can be conceived more opposed to their happiness and civilization, than this state of nominal independence, while it has nearly all the disadvantages of a state of absolute subjugation. The consequence is inevitable. They lose the lofty spirit and heroic courage of the savage state, without acquiring the virtues which belong to the civilized. Depressed in spirit, and debauched in morals, they dwindle away a wretched existence, a nuisance to the surrounding country. Unless some system can be devised, gradually to change this relation, and with the progress of education to extend over them our laws and authority, it is feared that all efforts to civilize them, whatever flattering appearances they may for a while exhibit, must ultimately fail."

Sir, I might continue quotations to any extent, in support of the principle that there can be no hope of improvement for the Indian, until he is brought within the pale of the law. But those I have recited, together with the fact that the failure of Congress to adopt them, has produced the disastrous results that were predicted, should be a sufficient guarantee to this House, and to the country, that no evil, but much good, would follow the passage of this proposed bill. The gentleman, recently at the head of the Indian Bureau, has recommended such a measure in his late report. His view of its necessity, is based upon the reasons which have been urged by the several superintendents and agents of the department. It is indeed pregnant with blessings to the poor savage. Under its operation, the murders, the massacres, and the destruction of property will cease. The wars between hostile bands will be suppressed. A new era will have commenced in the history of the red man, and the corner-stone of his civilization will have been laid. Hand in hand with this measure, should be a provision that each individual of whatever tribe, who will cultivate the soil for three consecutive years, shall be entitled to a grant of a certain number of acres of land, without the power, however, of alienating it. By thus doing, you will stimulate those who are industrious to exertion. With an experienced gentleman from whom I have already quoted, I believe that "the history of all nations, Christian or Heathen, will confirm the fact, that none of the sons and daughters of

men ever did become extensively civilized, virtuous and happy, except they were stimulated to industry and enterprise, by giving them an idea of separate property, and securing to each individual the fruits of his own labor, industry and enterprise, with the power of transmitting them to those who are most near and dear to him." And who can urge a stronger claim upon you in favor of such a grant than the poor savage, the descendant of that noble race who have given you an empire such as the world has never seen? While you are agitating the question in this Hall of the propriety of giving to every white settler a large portion of the public lands, "without money and without price," no voice has been heard in favor of that portion of God's creation, from whom you have received these lands, for a consideration too insignificant to be taken into the account. Has any one suggested that common justice would teach us to provide a home for the Indian, and that peradventure he might be reclaimed from his savage state? No, sir; he belongs to a doomed race, and it is not deemed worth the pains to endeavor to avert his impending fate. As if God in his mercy had ever placed upon this earth, a race created in his own image, fore-ordained only to suffer and to die!

Sir, give to the wandering savage a home secured to him by law, and you will have done much to redeem him. You thereby begin the process of denationalization, and the end will be his incorporation into the American family. Meanwhile bestow upon him civil privileges, withholding political rights, until he is sufficiently advanced to appreciate their enjoyment. Establish manual-labor schools for the education of his children in the useful arts, and in the English language, and afford him at the same time, the blessings of religious instruction. Insist that all the children as they arrive at a suitable age, shall attend these schools, and let them be kept as much as possible, from the demoralizing influences with which they are now surrounded. The annuities of the different bands will, of course, continue to be divided as they now are, *per capita*, and each individual who is the head of a family, will thus receive the means to aid him in his endeavors to meliorate his condition. Adopt these incipient measures, and thus prepare the way for the reception of the Indian as an equal into your community. You will thereby relieve him from the incubus which now threatens the speedy extinction of this unhappy people. It will then be no longer the case as it is now, that your first intercourse with the savage, the first apparently friendly grasp of the hand which you tender him, will infuse a slow but foul and mortal poison in his veins, to blight his hopes, destroy his energies, and send him an unresisting victim to the grave.

Sir, in this work you will have the cooperation of every man on the frontier, except, perhaps, of a few miserable wretches, who risk their souls' salvation by the sale of intoxicating liquors to the Indians. These few are rapidly diminishing, scathed as they are by the burning indignation of a sound public sentiment. For the rest, I know of no others among us so utterly depraved, as not to bid "God speed" to measures which have a direct tendency to elevate the poor savage. Sir, there is nothing to prevent the civilization of the Indian race. They are gifted with a high order of intellect, and an aptitude for acquiring knowl-

edge fully equal to that possessed by the whites; and this nation will be held responsible before God and man, if it longer neglects to provide for the preservation of the remaining tribes.

But, Mr. Chairman, I remark in conclusion, that if anything is to be done it must be done now. The busy hum of civilized communities is already heard far beyond the mighty Mississippi. You are about to remove the Oregon Indians to the *east* of the Cascade Mountains. The settlements in New Mexico and in Utah, are driving the tribes that roam the prairies in that quarter, towards the East and the North. Your pioneers are encircling the last home of the red man, as with a wall of fire. Their encroachments are perceptible, in the restlessness and belligerent demonstrations of the powerful bands who inhabit your remote western plains. You must approach these with terms of conciliation and of real friendship, or you must very soon suffer the consequences of a bloody and remorseless Indian war. Sir, what is to become of the fifty or sixty thousand savage warriors and their families, who line your frontier, when the buffalo and other game upon which they now depend for subsistence are exhausted? Think you they will lie down and die without a struggle? No, sir, no. The time is not far distant, when pent in on all sides, and suffering from want, a Philip or a Tecumseh will arise to band them together for a last and desperate onset upon their white foes. What then will avail the handful of soldiers stationed to guard the frontier. Sir, they, and your extreme western settlements, will be swept away as with the besom of destruction. We know that the struggle, in such case, would be unavailing on the part of the

Indians, and must necessarily end in their extermination. But this nation will subject itself to additional and awful retributions of that Providence without whose knowledge and permission "not even a sparrow falls to the ground," if it fails to use every endeavor to avert such a catastrophe. This Republic is even now expiating its guilt in this respect to some extent, by the visitations of pestilence, and the weakening of that bond of harmony among its members which was wont to exist. While manifesting an active sympathy for the nations of the Old World, who are down trodden by despotic power—while like the Pharisee of old, we are thanking God that we are not as other men are, we seem to forget that we are still pursuing a line of policy towards the Indian race, which has already destroyed countless thousands of them. Sir, this nation of more than twenty millions of people, can well afford to reach forth its friendly hand to rescue the residue of this unhappy people, from degradation and death. You are taking from them their lands, their homes, their all, and whatever return can be made them in this hour of their greatest need, should be granted with an ungrudging and generous hand.

Well might the eloquent Sevier, whose voice is now silenced in death, thus appeal to the Senate in behalf of the Indian tribes in 1839. Said he "Let us remember the kind and hospitable reception of our ancestors by the natives of the country, a reception which has been perpetuated in carved figures in the walls of the Rotunda of this Capitol; and in remembering these things, let us this day step forward and do something for our wretched dependents, worthy of a great, a merciful, and generous Christian people."